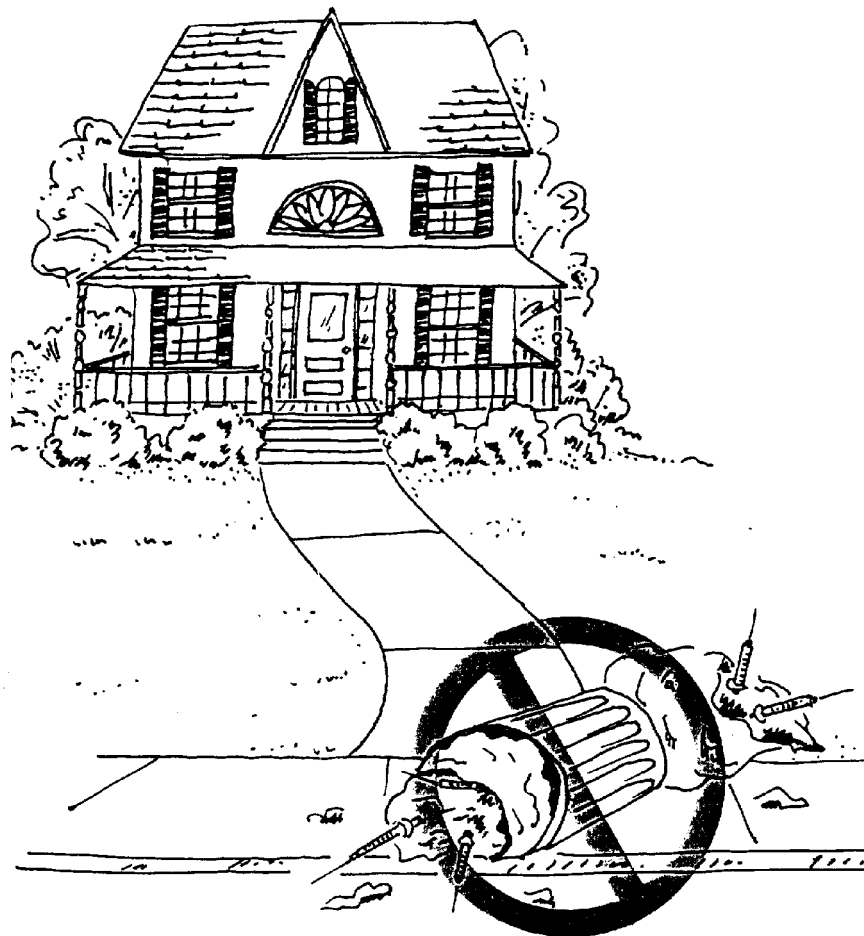




# Disposal Tips for Home Health Care



Printed on paper that contains at least 50 percent recycled fiber.

---

## Safer Practices

---

Millions of  
households  
produce  
medical  
waste

Every year, Americans use over one billion sharp objects in their homes to administer health care. These "sharps" include lancets, needles, and syringes. If they are not disposed of in puncture-resistant containers, they can injure trash handlers; can increase the risk of infection if they come in contact with contaminated materials such as bandages, dressings, and surgical gloves; and can pollute the environment.

We need

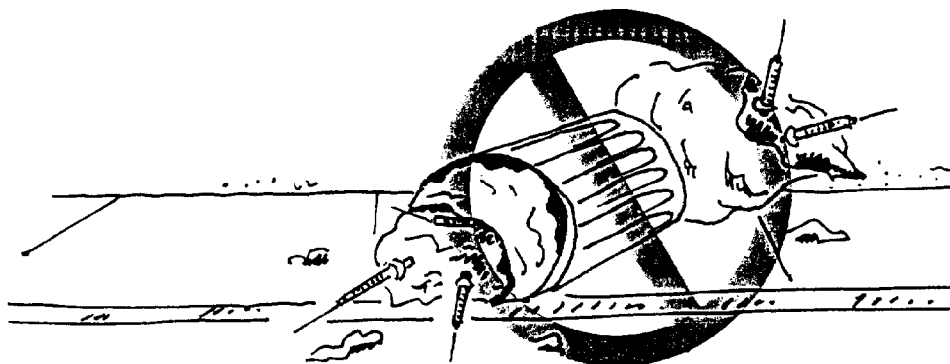
You play an important role in safe practices associated with health care at home.  
Through this brochure, we are asking your help to safely dispose of sharps and other contaminated medical waste, such as bandages and soiled disposable sheets. We urge all home health care patients to read and follow the disposal tips contained in this brochure and handout.

---

---

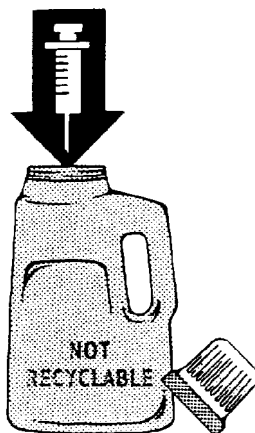
Patient  
handouts

Multiple copies Of the handout are available for distribution by health-care providers and product suppliers. Please complete the attached form, and return it to EPA at the address indicated. For more information on medical waste, call the RCRA Hotline, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Eastern time. The national, toll-free number is 1-800-424-9346 or 1-800-553-





## Disposal Tips for Home Health Care

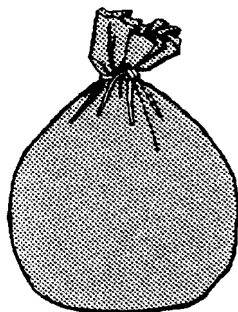


**You** can help prevent injury, illness, and pollution by following some simple steps when you dispose of the sharp objects and contaminated materials you use in administering health care in your home. You should place:

- ' Needles,
- @ Syringes,
- @ Lancets, and
- @ Other sharp objects

*in a hard-plastic or metal container with a screw-on or tightly secured lid.*

Many containers found in the household will do, or you may purchase containers specifically designed for the disposal of medical waste sharps. Before discarding a container, be sure to reinforce the lid with heavy-duty tape. **Do not put sharp objects in any container you plan to recycle or return to a store, and do not use glass or clear plastic containers** (see additional information below). Finally, make sure that you keep all containers with sharp objects out of the reach of children and pets.



We also recommend that:

- @ **Soiled bandages,**
- @ Disposable sheets, and
- @ Medical gloves

*be placed in securely fastened plastic bags before you put them in the garbage can with your other trash.*

---

## Preventing Injury and Pollution

---

Containers  
with sharps  
are not

EPA promotes all recycling activities, and therefore encourages you to discard medical waste sharps in sturdy, nonrecyclable containers, when possible. If a recyclable container is used to dispose of medical waste sharps, make sure that you don't mix the container with other materials to be recycled. Since the sharps impair a container's recyclability, a container holding your medical waste sharps properly belongs with the regular household trash. You may even want to label the container, **"NOT FOR RECYCLING."** These steps go a long way toward protecting workers and others from possible injury. (Although disposing of recyclable containers removes them from the recycling stream, the expected impact is minimal.)

Local

Your state or community environmental programs may have other requirements or suggestions for disposing of your medical waste. You should contact them for any information you may need.



For additional copies of these disposal tips, please call the RCRA Hotline Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. EST. The national toll-free number is (800) 424-9346; for the hearing impaired, it is TDD (800) 553-7672.



Office of Solid Waste  
United States  
Environmental Protection Agency  
401 M Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20460

Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use  
\$300

Detach here

## ORDER FORM

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the health-care professional brochure  
***Disposal Tips for Home Health Care: Educating Patients***  
**(EPA530-F-93-027A)**

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the patient flyer  
***Disposal Tips for Home Health Care***  
**(EPA530-F-93-027B)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_